1	2	3	4	5
2.	Chandigarh	1	—	—
3.	Gujarat	6	1	1
4.	Karnataka	13	—	2
5.	Kerala	2	1	—
6.	Maharashtra	11	1	—
7.	Orissa	1	—	—
8.	Punjab	2	—	—
9.	Tamil Nadu	8	1	4
10.	Uttar Pradesh	2	1	—
11.	West Bengal	1	1	2
12.	Rajasthan	—	—	2
13.	Madhya Pradesh	—	—	1
	Total	68	7	12

Restricting export of iron ore

939. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that country's iron ore experts have advised on restricting or stopping altogether the export of iron ore as it is considered worse than selling family silver;

(b) the factors that prevent us from selling it at best prices in the world than dumping it at cheapest prices;

(c) if so, whether Government has taken any decision on export of iron ore; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) An expert Committee, constituted by the Central Government, examined the issue of restrictions on iron ore export. The Committee consulted the various stakeholders including State Governments and submitted its report which was considered by the Government. Government agreed to the recommendation of the expert Committee that restrictions on export of iron ore are not required, while holding that even though conservation of iron ore resources of the country is of paramount importance, the same may not be achieved by banning or capping the export of iron ore but by taking recourse to appropriate fiscal measures.

(b) Indian ore in the export market till very recently was very competitively priced. For instance, in the month of April, 2008 the spot price of Indian iron was US$ 145 per metric tonne on FOB basis as compared to approximately US$ 134 per metric tonne which was the price of iron ore being exported by other countries on long tern agreement basis. However, the spot price of Indian ore has come down to US$ 51 per metric tonne on FOB basis in November, 2008 and the iron ore exports have also come down from 52.65 million tonnes for the period from 1st April to 15th November, 2007 to 45.20 million tonnes for the same period during the current financial year.

(c) and (d) In view of (a) and (b) above, there is no change in the policy of Government on export of iron ore.

Impact of FTA with Asian countries

940. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made any study about the impact of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Asian countries on our industry and agriculture; and

(b) if so, the details of the FTAs made so far and the result of the study made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Before entering into negotiations with its trading partners, studies are undertaken internally, as well as through joint study groups to study the feasibility of the proposed FTAs, including their impact on the domestic industry. Consultations are also held with the domestic stakeholders including the Apex Chambers of Commerce and Industry, industry associations as well as the administrative Ministries and Departments. In order to protect the interests of the domestic industry, these Agreements provide for maintaining sensitive/negative lists of items on which limited or no tariff concessions are granted under the FTA. In addition, in case of a surge in imports and injury to the domestic industry, a country is allowed to take measures such as anti-dumping and safeguards.

(b) India has signed Free Trade Agreements with the following countries

(i) The India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement covering only goods was signed on 28 December 1998 and its implementation began in March 2000.

(ii) India and Singapore have signed a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) on 29 June 2005 which became effective from 1 August, 2006. The CECA includes, *inter-alia*, free trade agreements in goods, services and investment.

(iii) The Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), covering goods, was signed by the SAARC member countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) during the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad on 6 January 2004 and has come into force from 1 January 2006. The tariff liberalization programme under SAFTA has commenced from 1 July 2006.